

HSR&D Annual Research Progress Report (Abstract) Instructions

Enter text in the Word document provided for your project abstract. **Completed abstract must fit on one page.** When writing the update to this abstract, you may wish to shorten Background/Rationale or Objective(s) Methods to make room for longer Findings/Results or Impact sections.

- The page limit does not include citations, which you report separately.
- Do not modify formatting including font size or margins.
- Do not include bulleted or tabbed text.
- Do not include “results” in tables.

The purpose of this abstract is to provide project highlights only. See FY98's Best Abstract (page 3) for exemplary content.

A. Project Description

Background/ Rationale

Why is this study important? Why is it relevant to VA?

Objective(s) Methods

Major goal(s), specific research question(s) and objective(s)

- Study design (e.g., randomized controlled trial, cohort study, case-control, etc.)
- Major characteristics (e.g., age, gender, diagnosis, inclusion/exclusion criteria) and size of the sample, and any control group; the intervention; and the setting
- Indicate if non-VA sites are included
- Major variables and source(s) of data
- Main types of analysis (decision modeling, cost-effectiveness, qualitative techniques, meta-analysis, etc.).

Findings/ Results

State the study's most important findings or accomplishments to date, indicating for each whether it is final, preliminary, or anticipated. For final results, indicate confidence interval and level of statistical significance, as well as publication status. Include negative as well as positive findings. *This section should provide a cumulative compilation of findings/results over the duration of the project.*

B. Progress Since Last Report

Status

Indicate major activities completed during the past 12 months, or since the previous report. Is project work ongoing or complete?

C. Impact

Impact

What is the nature of the impact (***anticipated or observed***) on veterans, the VA health care system, and the general public (e.g., improved quality of care, better patient outcomes, lower cost, better management, increased patient satisfaction, etc.)? Consider clinical, research, and policy applications. What steps have been taken to increase the impact of the research?

Publications / Citations (reported separately)

Publications/ Citations Your published abstract will include a list of bibliographic citations resulting from this project that you have reported to the ART Coordinator(s).

You are required to report these dissemination activities to Central Office as soon as you receive notification of acceptance, for either publication or presentation, of any information related to this project. **Also, notify your ART Coordinator(s) at the same time.**

Your ART Coordinator(s) can provide you with assistance in reporting such publications or presentations to Central Office. The ART Coordinator(s) can also provide you with guidance concerning other research publications and presentations that you should report as part of your work with your HSR&D Center.

Exemplary Abstract

ECV 97-014 Ethnic/Cultural Variations in the Care of Veterans with Osteoarthritis
C. Kent Kwoh, MD
VA Medical Center; Cleveland, OH
Funding Period: October 1997 - March 2001

BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:

Many investigations have confirmed that African-American patients are much less likely than White patients to receive total joint replacement for osteoarthritis of the hip and knee. This variation occurs even though the prevalence of osteoarthritis is similar in African-American and White patients. There is little understanding of the reasons for this variation. Understanding the reason for this variation is of profound importance to veterans because osteoarthritis is both extremely common and a leading cause of disability among veterans.

OBJECTIVE(S):

The indications for therapy of osteoarthritis are based on the patient's symptoms and quality of life. Therefore, understanding ethnic variations in the care of patients with osteoarthritis requires an understanding of ethnic differences in clinical severity of osteoarthritis, the impact of osteoarthritis on quality of life, patients perceptions and beliefs about their arthritis, and patients interactions with the health system. With this in mind, our objectives are to measure ethnic variation in: 1) the pathways leading from joint destruction to clinical symptoms and from clinical symptoms to impaired quality of life; 2) social and cultural attitudes of patients with osteoarthritis (such as attitudes towards arthritis, pain, and disability, cultural attitudes towards potential treatments, and cultural attitudes about the health system); and 3) patients' interactions with the health system.

METHODS:

This is a cross-sectional study of 600 veterans, half African-American and half White, with chronic hip or knee pain, cared for in VA primary care clinics. We are using two primary methodologies: 1) A structured survey with items measuring constructs in each of the above objectives. This includes the severity of the patients' arthritis, the impact of the arthritis on functional status and quality of life, cultural beliefs about arthritis, and the acceptability of different treatments of osteoarthritis. 2) A semi-structured, interview, analyzed with qualitative techniques. This interview focuses on the patients' interaction with the VA health care system, and the reasons for the patient's success or lack of success in obtaining satisfactory treatment for their osteoarthritis symptoms.

FINDINGS / RESULTS:

In this first phase of our study, we have successfully developed and pilot tested both the structured and semi-structured surveys. We have demonstrated the feasibility of our instruments and enrollment procedures. We have screened 1,104 patients for eligibility into the study and identified 230 eligible subjects, of whom 213 (98%) have agreed to participate. To date, 132 of the subjects have completed structured interviews. Major activities completed in the last 12 months include development and pilot testing of study instruments, refinement of enrollment procedures, and initial enrollment of subjects.

STATUS:

Project work is ongoing.

IMPACT:

Our study will provide important insight into the clinical, system, and cultural factors that may account for variations in procedure use in veterans with osteoarthritis. Our study will also provide insight into the differences in disease perceptions and values between African-American and White veterans. This insight will help VA providers deliver care that is more culturally sensitive.

PUBLICATIONS: None at this time.